

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for processing calls to a directory, comprising:
receiving a call to a directory, the call including one of a request to add data to the
directory, a request to modify data in the directory, ~~or~~and a request to delete data from the
directory, the call further including at least one attribute;
evaluating the attribute according to a first rule governing content of data that may be
included in the directory and a second rule governing structure of data that may be included in
the directory;
determining ~~if whether~~ the attribute complies with one of the first rule and the second
rule;
forwarding the call to the directory when the call attribute complies with one of the first
rule and the second rule; and
forwarding an error message to a source of the call when the call attribute does not
comply with one of the first rule and the second rule.
2. (Cancelled).
3. (Cancelled).
4. (Previously presented) The method for processing calls recited in claim 1, wherein
the call is forwarded to the directory through a directory access server controlling access to the
directory.
- 5-11. (Cancelled).
12. (Currently amended) The method for processing calls recited in claim 1, further
comprising:

determining ~~if whether~~ the call attribute complies with a data addition rule when the call includes a request to add data to the directory,
determining ~~if whether~~ the call attribute complies with a data modification rule when the call includes a request to modify data in the directory, and
determining ~~if whether~~ the call attribute complies with a data deletion rule when the call includes a request to delete data from the directory.

13. (Original) The method for processing calls recited in claim 1, wherein the directory employs the lightweight directory access protocol.

14. (Currently amended) A rule attribute enforcer, comprising:
a rule validator and a transaction monitor;

the transaction monitor being capable of intercepting a call to a directory, diverting the intercepted call to the rule validator if the call includes one of a request to add data to the directory, a request to modify data in the directory, and a request to delete data from the directory, and being further capable of forwarding the intercepted call to the directory if the call does not include one of a request to add data to the directory, a request to modify data in the directory, and ~~or~~ a request to delete data from the directory; and

the rule validator being capable of determining ~~if whether~~ an attribute of the call complies with one of a first rule governing content of data that may be included in the directory and a second rule governing structure of data that may be included in the directory, and being further capable of forwarding the call when the attribute complies with one of the first rule and the second rule; and returning an error message to a source of the call when the attribute does not comply with one of the first rule and the second rule.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Previously presented) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 14, wherein the rule validator is capable of forwarding the call to the transaction monitor, and the transaction monitor is capable of relaying the call to the directory.

17. (Previously presented) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 16, wherein the transaction monitor is capable of relaying the call to the directory through a directory access server that controls access to the directory.

18. (Previously presented) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 14, wherein the rule validator is capable of forwarding the call to the directory.

19. (Previously presented) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 14, wherein the rule validator is capable of forwarding the call to the directory through a directory access server that controls access to the directory.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Previously presented) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 14, wherein the rule validator is capable of forwarding the call to the transaction monitor, and the transaction monitor is capable of forwarding the call to the directory.

22. (Previously presented) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 21, wherein the transaction monitor is capable of relaying the call to the directory through a directory access server that controls access to the directory.

23. (Cancelled).

24. (Cancelled).

25. (Original) A directory network, including:
one or more client computers;
a directory, and
an attribute rule enforcer as recited in claim 14, the attribute rule enforcer being arranged

in the directory network so as to intercept calls from the one or more client computers to the directory.

26. (Previously presented) The directory network recited in claim 25, further including a directory access server capable of controlling access to the directory interposed between the attribute rule enforcer and the directory.